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DICKRAN KOUYMJIAN

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JULFA ON THE ARAX AND ITS FUNERARY MONUMENTS

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Julfa (Jūla) is one of the most famous and least documented Armenian cities of the pre-modern period (1). Though long abandoned, its continuing fame is due in part to New Julfa, a suburb of Isfahan in the heart of Iran, founded by and for refugees from old Julfa. After nearly four centuries of neglect, Julfa's ruins, especially the impressive vestiges of the cemetery on the Arax river, still astonish all who approach the site (Figs. 1-4). The importance of this commercial center to the history of international trade and the understanding of Armenian society in the sixteenth century warrants a detailed monograph.

The stylistic uniqueness of its carved tombstones within an already special Armenian tradition of the cross stone or *xac'k'ar* makes the preservation of the cemetery extremely important. Yet, very little research has been done on Julfa or its graveyard. Political considerations have been responsible for this lack. Its present position in the Autonomous Region of Naxiǰewan in the Soviet Socialist Republic

(1) The only monograph devoted to the city has been unavailable to us; it is cited through other secondary sources, S. Ter-Avetisjan, *Gorod Džuga*, Tiflis, 1937; there are, however, several entries on Julfa in encyclopedias and geographical surveys: *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, first edition (1913), «Djulfa», by M. Streck, no entry was included in the second edition under Djulfa; *The Great Soviet Encyclopedia*, vols. XXI, p. 830 ff and XLI, pp. 831, 838; *Islam Ansiklopedisi*, «Culfa» by Mirza Bala, vol. 3 (1963), pp. 225-6; *Hayastani bnuťyun*, fasc. 2, article by Argam Ayyazyan, Erevan 1976, pp. 34-37. The new *Armenian Encyclopedia* will undoubtedly have an article when it reaches the appropriate letter. Studies devoted specifically to the cemetery and notices on Julfa in larger works will be cited below in notes 3 and 4. For an overview of Armenian history in this period as well as a discussion of the relevant sources, see D. Kouymjian, «Sous le joug des Turcomans et des Turcs ottomans (XV^e-XVI^e siècles)», chapter 9 of *Histoire des Arméniens*, ed. Gérard Dédéyan, Toulouse, 1982, pp. 343-376.

of Azerbaijan, on the border with Iran and close to Turkey, makes it very difficult for either Soviet Armenian or foreign scholars to systematically survey the existing monuments. The Azerbaijani government seems to take little interest in the locality. Not only have the surviving monuments suffered from neglect, but a few years ago Italian archaeologists sounded the alarm on the deliberate delapidation of funerary monuments in order to reuse the stone for modern construction (2).

This study is intended to relaunch interest in Julfa and to make available a group of rare photographs of the cemetery taken more than half a century ago in the early years of the Soviet Republics of the Caucasus. The documentation was accumulated in September 1928 by Jurgis Baltrušaitis during a privileged visit to Julfa. Because of Baltrušaitis's close association with Armenian art and because of the respect Haġg Berbérian always had for one of his oldest French colleagues, it was decided to undertake a joint effort on the funerary stones of Julfa using these as yet unpublished archival photographs as a base.

Not a single monograph or book exists on the cemetery; to the best of our knowledge only two articles have been written expressly on the tombstones (3). On the other hand, as already mentioned, there have been sections in several volumes devoted to Julfa, the most complete being that of the Mekhitarist father Ľevond Ališan (4).

(2) In 1904, stone from the cemetery was used in a fashion described as «barbarous destruction» during the Tsarist construction of the railroad line that passes by the site on the Batum-Baku rail link, S. Barxudaryan, *Mijnadaryan hay čartarapetner ev k'argorc varpetner (Medieval Armenian Architects and Master Masons)*, Erevan, 1963, p. 169.

(3) N. Marr, «Des Monuments du cimetière de Djoulfa», *Xristjanskii Vostok*, vol. IV, no. 2, p. 198 et pl. IX, though this article has not been available for this study, Marr's principal ideas on the xac'ak'ars are resumed by S. Mnac'akanyan, *Nikolayos Marə ev haykakan čartarapetut'yunə (Nikolas Marr and Armenian Architecture)*, Erevan, 1969, pp. 167-8, however, without reference to this article. See note 5 for reference to the article by Vruyr. See also the «Additional Note» at the end of this study, p. 53.

(4) L. Ališan, *Sisakan*, Venice, 1893, section on Julfa, pp. 409-428 with nine illustrations. Though Ališan does not cite the work, he probably had access to H. Tēr Yovhaneanc', *Patmut'iwn Nor Ĵula or yAspahan*, 2 vols., New Julfa, 1880, which has material on old Julfa. N. H. Goroyan, *Parskastani Hayerə*, Tehran, 1968, the original manuscript is from 1898; the work of Ter-Avetisjan already cited in note 1; Leo, *Hayoc' patmut'yun*, Erevan, 1946, reprinted in *Erkeri zolovacu*, vol. III, Erevan, 1969, pp. 234-238 (quotations are from this edition); Argam Ayvazyan, *Naxiĵewani patmačartarapetakan hušarjannerə*, Erevan, 1978, Russian version *Pamjatniki*

Several photographic collections of the cemetery are known besides that of Baltrušaitis's. In 1913 the photographer-archaeologist Aram Vruyr, a close collaborator of Nikolas Marr, T'oros T'oramanian, and



FIG. 1. Jurgis Baltrušaitis on horseback before the Julfa cemetery, September 1928.
Photo courtesy of J. Baltrušaitis.

Josef Orbeli, journeyed from Ani to Julfa and took a large series of photographs (5). There is also some reason to believe that the pro-

armjanskoj arxitektury Naxičevanskoj ASSR, Erevan, 1981, pp. 69-75 (references to this text); *idem*, «Julayi gerzmanatunə», *Sovetakan Hayastan* (1984), no. 1, pp. 28-9. Related material can also be found in M. Smbatean, *Nkaragir surb Karapeti Vanic' Ernjakay ew šrjakayic' nora*, Tiflis, 1904, and H. Arak'eleian, *Parskastani Hayerə, nranc' anc'ealə, nerkan ew apagan*, vol. I, Vienna, 1911. John Carswell, *New Julfa, The Armenian Churches and Other Buildings*, Oxford, 1968, contains a summary of the last days of old Julfa and an appendix of excerpts from western travellers' accounts on New Julfa which in passing also mention the state of Julfa on the Arax in the seventeenth century. Finally, Karapet Karapetian, *Işfahān, New Julfa: Le Case degli Armeni — The Houses of the Armenians*, Rome, 1974, contains bibliography and historical information pertaining to Julfa.

(5) Artasēs Vruyr, «Aram Vruyri Ĵula hnagitakan antip aknarkə, (Aram Vruyr's Unpublished Archaeological Survey Ĵula)», *PBH*, 1967, no. 4, pp. 169-180. The 115 photos relating to Julfa are now in the possession of his son Artasēs; the notice on Julfa was written in September 1915.

lific photographer Ermakov also took pictures on the site before 1910 (6). In recent times, the 1960s and 1970s, individual scholars and teams, in particular those associated with the study of Armenian architecture in Milan, have collected important visual documentation.



FIG. 2. Julfa cemetery, circa 1910-1913.
Photo courtesy of Herman Vahramian, Milan.



FIG. 3. Julfa cemetery, circa 1970.
Photo courtesy H. Vahramian, Milan.

The history of Julfa dates back to the time of king Tigran the Great, at least according to Armenian sources. The city is mentioned in book I, chapter XXX of the *History* of Movsēs of Xoren in a list of localities; he cites as his source the legendary Syriac writer of the early Christian period, Mar Abas Catina (7). The city is mentioned

(6) A fraction of the 15,000 or so photographs of Ermakov preserved in archival collections has now been published by Herman Vahramian with introductory text by Mario Verdone, *Ermakov, Armenia 1910*, Venice, 1982.

(7) «...he (Aždahak, king of Media) settled (them) ... as far as opposite the castle of Nakhchawan, and the three towns of Khram, Jułay, and Khorshakunik», *Moses Khorenats'i, History of the Armenians*, translation and commentary by Robert W. Thomson, Cambridge, Mass., 1978, p. 120; on the question of Mar Abas Catina, see Thomson's remarks on pp. 14, 54-5.

twice by Lewond the historian (late eighth century), first, during the Arab invasions of 642-3 as a crossing «through the straight of Julfa», and again, in 689 as a city in the same series as cited by Movsēs (8). Later references in medieval sources are rare and meager. In 962 it is mentioned, and in 976 both Julfa and «its monastery» are noted (9). In the eleventh century catholicos Sargis refers to it in a decree along with «Erñjak, Naxčuan and Čahuk» (10). There are suggestions that inscriptions on cross stones date back as early as the seventh, ninth, or twelfth centuries, but, as will be discussed later, this seems highly doubtful. On the other hand the Arab geographer Yāqūt (d. 1229) mentions the city, as does the *Geography* attributed to Vardan the historian (d. 1269) (11). During the next century, in 1386 specifically, Timur Lang crossed the Arax on the famous stone bridge at Julfa (12).

More consistent and concrete references to Julfa are provided by the colophons of Armenian manuscripts starting in the fourteenth century; 1325 and 1386, increasing in the fifteenth, 1407, 1447, 1456, 1487; gradually accelerating in frequency in the latter sixteenth century, 1562, 1584, 1587, 1594; and finally culminating on the eve of Julfa's destruction

(8) *Lewondeay vardapeti Patmut'wn Hayoc'*, ed., St. Petersburg, 1887, II, 24; English trans. Zaven Arzoumanian, *History of Lewond, The Eminent Vardapet of the Armenians*, Philadelphia, 1982, pp. 50, 56; the passage, referring to a crossing of the Arax at Julfa, is also quoted by A. Alboyadjian (Alpōyačean), *History of Armenian Emigrations*, vol. I, Cairo, 1941 (in Armenian), p. 345.

(9) The 962 reference is from Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 410, no source is given. For the reference of 976, found in a decree of Xač'ik catholicos, see G. Yovsēp'ean, *Yišatakarank' jeragrac' (Colophons of Manuscripts)*, Antelias, 1951, no. 59, cols. 129-132, originally published by Y. Šahxat'unc'ean, *Storagrut'wn kat'ulikē Ējmiacni ew hing gawarac'n Araratay*, vol. II, Ējmiacin, 1842, pp. 305-307. See also, Smbatean, *Nkaragir*, p. 484, and Ayvazyan, *Naxijewani hušarjannerə*, p. 72.

(10) Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 410 provides the portion of the decree relative to Julfa without citing his source: «Erñjak, Naxčuan, Ĵulay ork'an Erasxay getn hatanē, Čahuk».

(11) Yāqūt, *Mu'jamal al-buldān*, ed. F. Wustenfeld, 6 vols., Göttingen, 1866-1873, III, p. 126. Hayk Pērpērean, *Asxarhac'oyc' Vardanyay Vardapeti*, critical edition, Paris, 1960, p. 15; on the question of the work's attribution to the late fourteenth or early fifteenth century see the introduction and Charles Dowsett's review in *BSOAS*.

(12) Šaraf al-dīn 'Alī Yazdī, *Zafar-nāmah*, French translation by Petis de la Croix, *Histoire de Timur Bec*, as quoted by Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 410, and J. von Hammar, *Geschichte des Osmanischen Reiches*, French translation, J.-J. Hellart, *Histoire de l'Empire Ottoman*, vol. II, Paris, 1835, p. 18.

in 1604 with a flood of manuscripts during the first four years of the seventeenth century (13).

But, by far the largest potential source of information on the city and its inhabitants is contained in the inscriptions of churches and monuments in the region, particularly on the thousands of carved slabs in

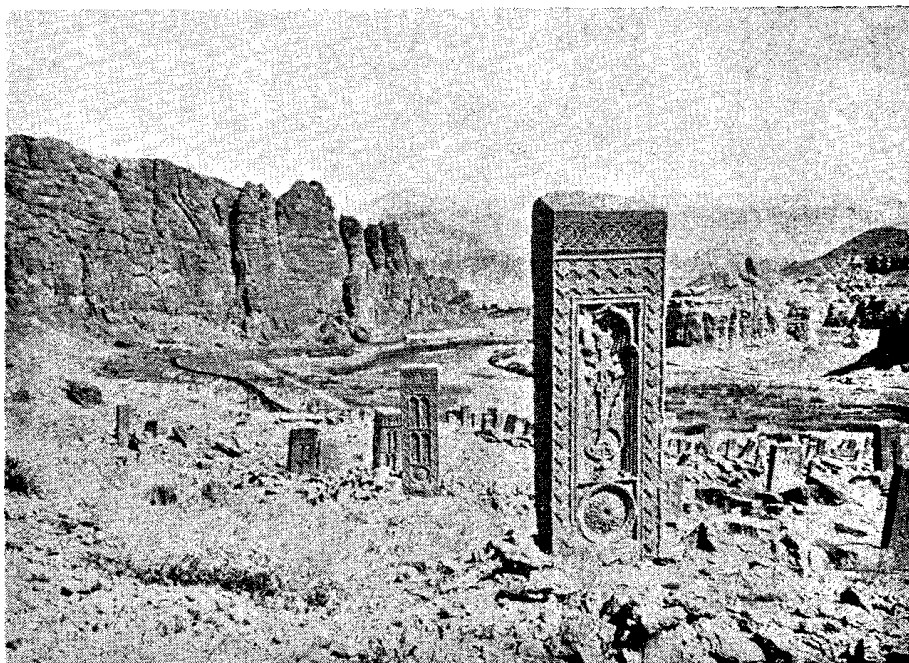


FIG. 4. Julfa cemetery facing the Arax river with railway line visible, circa 1972.

Photo courtesy Centro Studi e Documentazione della Cultura Armena, Milan.

the cemetery. From photographs and drawings Ališan was able to decipher and publish some 30 of these. They date without exception

(13) For the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, L. Xaç'ikyan, *XIV dari hayeren jeragreri hišatakaranner*, Erevan, 1950, *XV dari hayeren jeragreri hišatakaranner*, 3 vols., Erevan, 1955, 1958, 1967, in part translated into English in Avedis K. Sanjian, *Colophons of Armenian Manuscripts 1301-1480*, Cambridge, Mass., 1969. The colophons for the sixteenth century have not yet been published; the material has been gathered from catalogues of Armenian manuscripts. For the seventeenth century, V. Hakobyan and A. Hovhannisyan, *Hayeren jeragreri XVII dari hišatakaranner (1601-1620 t't.)*, vol. I, Erevan, 1974. A methodological discussion of how dated manuscripts can be used statistically to enhance our knowledge of obscure

to the second half of the sixteenth century (14). He says, however, that according to some authorities, the oldest xač'k'ars are from the seventh and eight centuries, while according to others the oldest one is of 1461 (15). The eventual study and systematic publication of the entire corpus of inscriptions will not only clarify this point, but will also provide a unique body of data on a major Armenian urban agglomeration in the late fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

Other details about the city come from minor Armenian chronicles (16), Islamic sources (17), popular tradition (18), contemporary travellers' accounts (the majority European), and general nineteenth and twentieth century studies already mentioned above. Of the foreign travellers to have passed through Julfa, the most important are Vincenzo Alessandri (1571), Newbery (1581), Cartwright (1590), Tavernier (1633 ?), Alexandre of Rhodes (1648), Chardin (1673), Villot (1688), Pouillet (1659), Ouseley (1812), Ker Porter (1817-20), Dubois (1834), Simenov (ca. 1858). Their accounts allow us to draw a profile of the city, its geography, trade, buildings, inhabitants, the important cemetery, and its modern desolation (19).

historical periods will be found in D. Kouymjian, «Dated Armenian Manuscripts as a Statistical Tool for Armenian History», *Medieval Armenian Culture*, eds. Thomas J. Samuelian and Michael Stone, Chico, CA, 1983, pp. 425-439.

(14) Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 424, proposes a tentative reading of an inscription to the twelfth century, but there is no tangible evidence to support this, see *infra*. Goroyan even gives a reading of 1113 for one, but this, too, seems unlikely, Goroyan, *Parskastani Hayerə*, p. 225, as quoted by Karapetian, *İsfahān, New Julfa*, p. 45, note 1.

(15) Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 427, cites no authorities for either dating nor is the xač'k'ar of 1461 illustrated; perhaps the information is from Tēr Yovhaneanc'. Ayvazyan continues to propagate this notion, again without tangible proof, saying «the cross stones from the IXth-XVth centuries by their simple form lack the richness of decorative carving», *Pamjatniki Naxičevanskoï ASSR*, p. 74. See *infra* for a further discussion, especially the «additional note», p. 53.

(16) The shorter histories and chronicles have been collected by V. A. Hakobyan, *Manr zamanakagrut'yunner XIII-XVIII dd.*, 2 vols., Erevan, 1951, 1956; though they contain numerous references to Julfa, only those pertaining to the forced migration (for which see *infra*) have detailed information.

(17) Later references to Julfa, after its destruction in the early seventeenth century, in Arabic, Turkish, and Persian sources will be found in *Islam Ansiklopedisi*, article «Culfa».

(18) Aram Łanalanyan, *Avandapatum*, Erevan, 1969, collects the various oral traditions which relate to Julfa and its famous bridge, for which see *infra*.

(19) Sixteenth century travel accounts are gathered in H. Hakobyan, *Ulegrut'yunner*, vol. I, (1253-1582), Erevan, 1932. For the seventeenth century

Several Armenian histories or chronicles, contemporary to the destruction of the city and the forced emigration of its population in 1604, provide details about the earlier period. The most important and factual is that of Aṛak'el of Tabriz (20). Later works written about New Julfa also mention in passing important persons from the older city, but generally they are based on Aṛak'el. Armenian sources of the sixteenth and seventeenth century are replete with references to inhabitants, merchants, priests, artists, and writers who were originally from Julfa; they are easily recognizable by the Armenian sobriquet Julayec'i, «from or of Julfa.»

Julfa was situated on the north bank of the Arax at a point where the Eṇjak/Alinja river flows into the Arax. Sharply rising cliffs enclose it in a crescent-shaped semicircle, producing, on the gradually rising slopes, an amphitheatre effect often commented on by western travellers. The town was located in the ancient Armenian province of Goṭn, about thirty kilometers south of Naxiḡewan. A few miles west of the principal ruins are the remains of a once-famous bridge over the Arax. It is not clear when or by whom it was built; though oral tradition suggests the time of Alexander the Great, others have proposed the Roman period (21). Because of this bridge, Julfa

see the Appendix in Carswell, *New Julfa*, pp. 73-87, though most of the material is on New Julfa. For a more general view see Jack Vartoogian, «The Image of Armenia in European Travel Accounts of the Seventeenth Century», unpublished doctoral thesis, Columbia University, New York, 1974; and recently, Souren Kevorkian, «Témoignages de voyageurs sur le peuplement de l'Arménie au XVII^e s.», *REArm*, 15 (1981), pp. 439-467. For early nineteenth century accounts, see Hakobyan, *Ulegrut'yunner*, vol. VI, (1800-1820), Erévan, 1934. Ališan, *Sisakan*, *loc. cit.*, provides in the footnotes excerpts in extenso in the original languages of the following: Vincenzo Alexandri, Cartwright, Boullaye le Gouz, Pouillet, Tavernier, Chardin, Gemeli, Alexandre de Rhodes, and Dubois.

(20) Aṛak'el Davrižec'i, *Patmut'iwn*, Ējmiacin, 1896 pp. 16-92; large excerpts of the sections relevant to Julfa are given in extenso by Ališan, *Sisakan*, pp. 414-418. Several other accounts exist, including an anonymous chronicle published by Hakobyan, *Minor Chronicles*, vol. I, no. XII, pp. 178-188; a list of other works is given by Hakobyan, p. 178. Another eyewitness account is offered by an Armenian catholic bishop of Naxiḡevan published in *Journal Asiatique*, March 1837, cf. Carswell, *New Julfa*, p. 3, note 5.

(21) On the legend attributing the construction of the bridge to Alexander, see Łanalanyan, *Avandapatum*, no. 587A, pp. 216-7, 460; in its initial part it is not only like that of no. 827, p. 384, which describes the feast prepared by Xōḡay Xac'ik for Shah 'Abbās, as already pointed out by Łanalanyan, but is directly ins-

became one of the major points on the caravan route connecting Iran and the east with Asia Minor and the west, the so-called Erzerum road. The Arax is still today the natural boundary between Soviet Armenia and Turkey and Iran, as in past centuries it separated the Ottoman Empire and the Safavids. It is probably the bridge as a link between east and west, that in great part allowed the merchants of Julfa in the fifteenth and especially the sixteenth century to conduct such wide-ranging commercial operations. By the mid-sixteenth century, Julfa merchants were well established in Venice and India and nearly everywhere in between (22). In Aleppo during this period they were regarded as *the* Armenian merchants par excellence (23). No doubt tolls levied on the crossing of the bridge also resulted in revenue for the town.

The sources refer to Julfa as a village (*giwl*), town (*giwlak'alak'*), city (*k'alak'*), and lofty city (*gelak'alak'*). Agriculture was virtually unknown because of the rocky terrain. However, there is some indication that the area to the north of Julfa, on the other side of the cliffs, was cultivatable. The land south of the Arax, however, was not very fertile. It has been suggested that Naxiĵewan served as supplier for the city. The local economy included mining and quarrying, while sheep herding and weaving was known until recent times (24). However, the wealth and reputation of Julfa was based

pired by the long account of the reception of Shah 'Abbās in 1603 found in Aṛak'el. The various legends gathered about the bridge, nos. 587A-E, offer little concrete information on its construction or destruction, though one, no. 587E, says the destruction was in the time of Shah 'Abbās, see *infra* note 33.

(22) Ališan, *Sisakan*, pp. 411-420, publishes a series of documents in Armenian and Italian from the Mekhitarist archives of the activity of Julfa merchants in Venice in the sixteenth century; see also Leo, *Patmut'yun*, III, p. 235, and Ayvazyān, *Pamjatniki Naxičevanskoī ASSR*, p. 70, for a list of cities where Julfa merchants were active.

(23) Among the Armenian merchants working in Aleppo, the Venetian merchant Friderich in 1563 puts the Julfa *xōjays* in first place, calling them «the merchants of Armenia», *Hay žolovordi patmut'yun*, vol. IV, Erevan, 1972, p. 316. More palpable proof of the Julfa presence in Aleppo is provided by the tombstones in the Armenian cemeteries of Salibe and Aziziye; of the 27 recorded funerary inscriptions dating before 1604, 19 are of Julfa merchants, Artawazd Siwrmēēan, *Patmut'iwn Halēpi azgayin gerezmanatanc' ew arjanagir hayerēn tapanak'areru (History of the National Cemeteries of Aleppo and the Inscriptions of Armenian Tombstones)*, Aleppo, 1935, pp. 12-3, 25.

(24) Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 427.

on commerce. Apparently at one point the population increased so much that the city sprawled out to the other side of the Arax.

In December 1581, the English traveller Newbery passed through Julfa and reported the city to have 3,000 houses and 15,000 to 20,000 inhabitants as well as seven churches (25). A decade later in 1590 his compatriot Cartwright said there were 2,000 houses and 10,000 souls (26). However, other estimates have been as high as 4,000 houses and 40,000 inhabitants, and even as many as 10,000 houses (27). At the peak of its prosperity there must have been at least 3,000 structures crowded on a narrow strip between the mountains and the river. According to Cartwright, both Armenians and Georgians were living there, but the city has always been, at least in post-medieval times, Armenian; there are no other references to either Georgians or Muslims in large numbers. No inscriptions in Georgian, Arabic or Persian are reported. No other religious buildings besides Armenian churches are known (28).

Unlike other areas of the region, the houses and the churches of Julfa were made entirely of massive stone, apparently without the use of mortar. The stone was quarried in the immediate area. The durability of this material is responsible for the extensive vestiges still visible on the site after 380 years of neglect. This stone construction perforce resulted in the development of skilled masons; their artistic achievement is preserved in the funerary monuments of the adjacent cemetery. The vastness of this «field of soldiers», as Ališan called it, can only be comprehended in terms of size and numbers. At one time there may have been as many as 10,000 gravestones,

(25) John Newbery, *Letters Concerning the Voyage of M. J. Newbery and M. Ralph Fitch*, Hakluyt, *The Principal Navigations*, vol. II, London, 1598; Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 413.

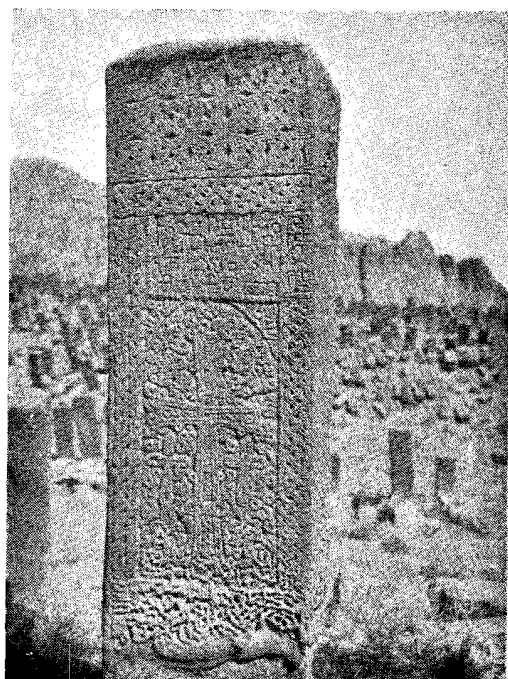
(26) John Cartwright, *The Preachers Travels...to the East Indies, through ...Syria, Mesopotamia, Armenia, Media, Hircania, and Parthia...*, London, 1611; Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 419, note 1, and Carswell, *New Julfa*, p. 73, provide the passage on Julfa and Cartwright's very favorable impressions of the charm of the Armenians of that city.

(27) Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 410, without citing his source for these high figures.

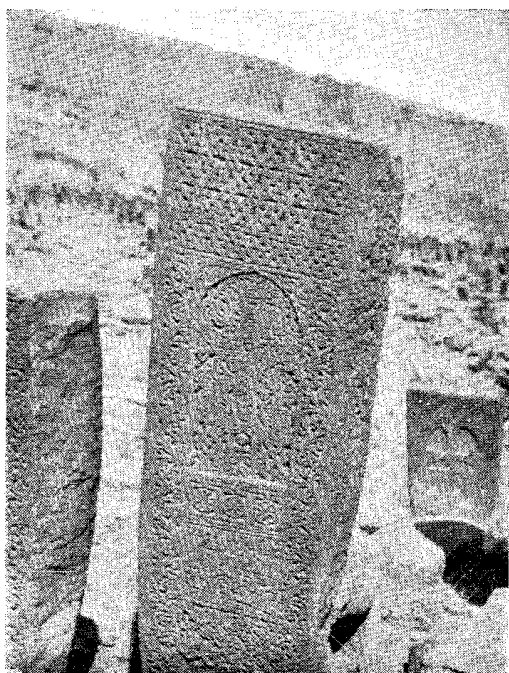
(28) Ališan, *ibid.*, p. 423 speaks of *Franki ekelec'eac'*, Catholic, most probably uniate, churches which places in doubt the conjecture of Leo, *History*, III, p. 251, that the Julfans suffered because there were no Catholics among them whereas the Armenians of Naxiĵevan and Ernĵak were saved from the forced exile of 'Abbās by Roman Catholic pressure.



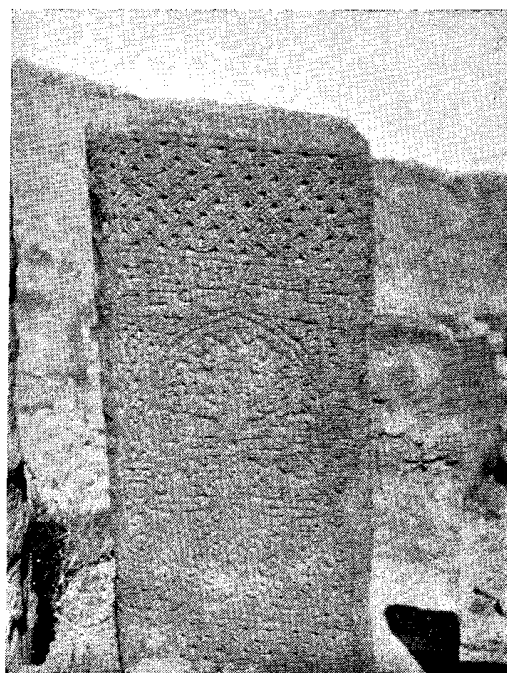
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FIGS. 5-8. 5. Julfa, xač'k'ar dated 1494. 6. Julfa, xač'k'ar of 1546. 7. Julfa, xač'k'ar of 1550. 8. Julfa, xač'k'ar of 1551. Photos Baltrušaitis.

more recent estimates place the surviving number between 2,000 and 5,000 (29).

As the sixteenth century moved towards its close, the prosperity and reputation of Julfa increased. Its merchants were trading everywhere. The special concessions they received as silk traders from Shah 'Abbās of Iran by at least 1592 may have contributed to their renown (30). An account of the wealth accumulated as well as the material culture imported from east and west into Julfa to decorate the homes of rich is offered by Arak'el in his description of the three day feast and reception given by the great *xōjāy* of the city, Xač'ik, for Shah 'Abbās during his stay there after the conquest of Tabriz, Erevan, and Ezerum from the Ottomans in 1603-4 (31). Some say it was the manifestation of this wealth that caught the eye and whetted the appetite of the shah and eventually led to the city's destruction. Others, however, suggest that the great Armenian merchants already trading for and with the shah encouraged the Safavids to take Armenia under their protection (32).

Whatever the reasons from the Armenian point of view, western scholars who have studied the life of shah 'Abbās and the Turko-Persians wars see the fate of Julfa directly linked to the shah's scorched earth policy before the invading Ottoman armies. By completely destroying the towns, cities, and cultivated lands along the natural passage between Asia Minor and Iran, that is the Arax valley, the Ottomans would have difficulty provisioning and lodging their armies on an eastern offense.

Thus, in the late summer of 1604, Shah 'Abbās instructed his gener-

(29) Alexander of Rhodes offers the highest figure of 10,000, *History of the Mission of the Society of Jesus, Established in Persia by Reverend Father Alexander of Rhodes*, trans. by A. T. Wilson, *B.S.O.A.S.*, vol. III/4 (1925); see also Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 424, note 2, for the French version of the passage. In the mid-nineteenth century, Simenov counted 3,000 inscriptions, Ališan, p. 427; in 1904 Ter-Avetisjan reported some 5,000 were still standing, Ayvazyan, *Pamjatniki Naxičevanskoï ASSR*, p. 74. In his time, 1913-1915, Vruyr reports a count by B. Alamalyan of 2,100 stones both standing and fallen, which he says cannot be wrong by more than 30-50 in number, Vruyr, «Julfa», p. 180. Recent photos show several hundred still standing and more than a thousand on the site. In 1976 there were still about 3,000, see the final note, p. 53.

(30) Tēr Yovhaneanc', *Patmut'iwn*, I, pp. 158-9, cf. *Hay žolovordi patmut'-yun*, IV, p. 325.

(31) Arak'el, *Patmut'iwn*, p. 16; Leo, *Patmut'yun*, III, pp. 237-8.

(32) Karapetian, *Isfahān, Julfa*, p. 30.

als to transfer the population of Julfa and the surrounding regions all the way from Van and Erevan to Iran. The local inhabitants were caught unprepared. Three days' notice was given, an historical foreboding of the three days' notice of the forced evacuations of the 1915 Genocide. To accelerate the withdrawal the shah ordered the city of Julfa to be burned. The population moved east along the left, the northern, bank of the Arax for some time, but the shah, fearing the approach of the Turkish army, ordered his military leaders to force an immediate crossing of the river in order to enter Iranian territory. The horrifying description of this crossing offered by Aṛak'el and others can only cast doubt on the shah's concern for the civil population.

Apparently in 1604 the bridge over the river was not used. Its destruction is attributed to the time of Shah 'Abbās, though exactly how and when is unclear (33). It was standing in 1581, according to Newbery, but in the seventeenth century Tavernier, Chardin, and Tournefort crossed the Arax in a boat (34). Today the piers of this massive stone structure can still be seen on the shores of the river. During the crossing of 1604, thousands of Armenians lost their lives by drowning; in the winter of the same year thousands more died of cold, disease, and starvation. Some 100,000 souls were involved in the forced exodus. How many finally reached Julfa the following year is not clear, but 30,000 were settled in the silk producing regions near the Caspian Sea where they languished and eventually disappeared (35). The shah was so determined to leave

(33) The path of the forced march was along the northern bank of the river and the crossing was some distance away from Julfa. Tavernier, who passed by Julfa in 1633, reports, «There was a fair Stone-Bridge, which Sha-Abas caused to be broken down; when he wholly destroy'd the Town, that it might be no harbour for the *Turks*», Jean Baptiste Tavernier, English trans., *The Six Voyages... through Turkey, into Persia and the East Indies*, London, 1677, I, p. 19, as quoted in the Appendix of Carswell, *New Julfa*, p. 73.

The destruction of the bridge in the time of 'Abbās is also reported by Abraham of Crete (d. 1736) in his *History*, *Abraham kat'olikos Kretac'woy Patmagrut'iwn anc'ic'n iwroc' ew Natr-Šahin parsic'*, Vałaršapat, 1870, pp. 41-2, as cited by V. Harout'yunyan, *Mijnadaryan hayastani karavanatnern u kamurnjēra*, Erevan, 1960, p. 119, note 1. On the oral tradition attributing its destruction to Shah 'Abbās, Łanalanyan, *Avandapotum*, no. 587E, pp. 217, 240; see also, Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 413; Ayvazyan, *Pamjatniki*, p. 135. Fig. 123 in Ališan illustrates by photo the boat crossing in his day.

(34) Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 413; Ayvazyan, *Pamjatniki*, p. 135, quoting HA, March (1899), p. 66.

(35) Aṛak'el, *Patmut'iwn*, pp. 52 ff.; an eyewitness Spanish writer reports 100,000 Armenians involved in that forced march, *Hay zolovordi patmut'*

Julfa deserted that in the following year he sent a special army back to the city to round up those who had stolen back, about a thousand, and again in 1616/17 a thousand more families were rounded up in the ruined city and its environs (36). Seldom in the post Mongol-Timurid period has an entire city been so quickly and systematically destroyed.

In the centuries that followed, scattered Armenians did move back to Julfa in an inconspicuous way. Shortly after the mass exodus, two great caravanserays were built, one on each side of the river, by the rich and famous *xōjāy* Nazar of New Julfa in respect of the memory of his native city (37). Tavernier also reports in 1633 that certain Armenian families returned to the fertile lands above Julfa. Bouillage de Gouz was offered a meal of a whole lamb by an Armenian cleric in 1647 (38). In 1648 a certain bishop Hovhannēs even built his own church in the mountains above the city. Ališan also reports an inscription of 1687 on the church of St. Gēorg (39). In the eighteenth century, the chief of the village of Julfa gave his support to the liberation struggle of Davit' Bek and in 1723 a small army under the leadership of two brothers from the town joined the forces of Davit' (40).

Toward the end of the eighteenth century there were some 40 to 60 houses in the village; in 1812 Ouseley reported that 45 Armenian families lived there in difficult circumstances; in 1834 Dubois spent a night in the home of a certain Artun (41). In Ališan's time, the end of the nine-

yun, IV, p. 99, quoting, G. A. Ezov, *Snošenje Petra Velikogo s armyanskim narodov*, St. Petersburg, 1898, p. 467 ff; the authors themselves suggest a much higher number, 300,000 and more, *H.ž.p.*, IV, pp. 98-9. See also Leo, *Patmut'yun*, III, pp. 238-261; Carswell, *New Julfa*, pp. 3-4; Rafaël du Mans, *l'Etat de la Perse*, Paris, 1660, as quoted by Carswell, *New Julfa*, p. 74.

(36) Aṛak'el, as quoted by Carswell, *New Julfa*, p. 4, and Karapetian, *Iṣfahān, Julfa*, p. 32.

(37) «*Cogia Nazar*, one of the chief Armenians that went out of Zulfa, growing rich by Trade...built two great Inns, for the Honour of this Country, in Zulfa, upon each side of the River one. He spent above an hundred thousand Crowns, but dying left two remarkable Pieces of Work unfinish'd», Tavernier (1633), *The Six Voyages*, London, 1677, I, p. 19, as quoted by Carswell, *New Julfa*, p. 74.

(38) Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 420, note 3, «A peine fusmes nous campez que le Vertabète nous envoya un mouton bouilly tout entier pour faire *Korban*».

(39) Alexander of Rhodes, excerpted in the original in Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 422; the church inscription is on p. 427.

(40) *Hay žolovordi patmut'yun*, IV, pp. 165, 168.

(41) Hakobyan, *Ulegruṭ'yunner*, vol. VI, p. 443; Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 422; quoting Dubois.

teenth century, some say there were as many as 80 to 100 houses, but others say there were hardly even that number of inhabitants (42). By 1913 there were 20 to 30 houses, a Russian customs post, a cossack barracks, and, across the river, a Persian khan and frontier post. Some 20 churches were reported to be still standing (43). In 1936 the population of the village and the frontier post combined was reported to be 2,100 (44). Today, or at least during the past couple of decades, a new village with the same name Julfa has been established a bit south of the old one. Recent photographs of the cemetery still show it to be impressively decorated by hundreds of upright *xač'k'ars* (Figs. 3-4). To the best of our knowledge, no scientific research on the site has been encouraged by the local authorities.

* * *

The distinctness of the Julfa funerary monuments, *xač'k'ars* as they are sometimes called, has been alluded to on several occasions. The *xač'k'ar* or cross stone has been the subject of several recent pictorial albums and a few studies, most of them introductions to these volumes (45). Massive, upright monoliths have been part of the Armenian tradition from earliest times. Similar memorial stele existed during the Urartian kingdom, and, in the millenia before, they are found in the form of menhirs and *višaps* (literally dragons). Later, quadrilateral stones carved on four sides with holy images are known from the first centuries of Christianity in Armenia (46). The *xač'k'ar* proper, a stone

(42) Ališan, *ibid.*

(43) *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, first edition, «Djulfa».

(44) *Islam Ansikolpedisi*, «Culfa»; statistics on the tons of export and import to pass through the rail link at Julfa for 1927-8 are also given.

(45) Levon Azarian and Armen Manoukian, *Documenti di Architettura Armena*, vol. 2, *Khatchkar*, Milan, 1969, with detailed bibliography, text in English and Italian, later editions with Armenian résumé; *Haykakan xač'k'arar* (*Armenian Khatchkars*), Ėjmiacin, 1973, title and text in Armenian, English, and French, photos by Manouk, essay by Levon Azaryan; *Khatchkar, Croix en pierre Arméniennes*, bound together with *Miniatures arméniennes*, catalogue of a combined exhibition, essays by Giulio Ieni and Armen Manoukian, Centro Studi e Documentazione della Cultura Armena, Milan, n.d. [1982?]. Also the following specialized articles: A. N. Šahinyan, «Haykakan xač'kareri arveste (The Art of Armenian Xač'k'ars)», *Ėjmiacin*, 1960, no. 5, pp. 36-45, no. 6, pp. 44-52, no. 7, pp. 38-44, no. 8, pp. 43-52, no. 9, pp. 45-51; and A. L. Jakobson, «Ob armjanskix xačkarax», *PBH* (1978), no. 1, pp. 215-223. See the following note for related bibliography.

(46) G. Yovsēp'ean, «Funerary Stelae and Their Archaeological Value for the History of Armenian Art», *Materials and Studies for the History of Armenian*



9 a



9 b



9 c



9 d



9 e



9 f

FIGS. 9 a-f. Julfa, details of xač'k'ars with diminutive representations of the deceased. a. 1551, detail of Fig. 8; b. date unknown; c. 1541-1550, d. 1556, detail of Fig. 10, date unknown; e. f. 1575. Photos a.-d. Baltrušaitis; e.-f. courtesy of H. Vahramian, Milan.

which bears as its central motif a cross, became common in the ninth century and after, being employed as a free standing commemorative marker or as an offering carved onto the wall of a church. They also served as funerary monuments from the early period. As for the Julfa monoliths, they are almost without exception tombstones, though apparently on occasion some were erected near church buildings as memorials (47).

For a variety of reasons, the *xač'k'ars* of the Julfa cemetery represent one of the more interesting corpora of Armenian relief sculpture. First, in the second half of the sixteenth century, the Julfa artists created their own distinctive style. Second, this stylistic development was brutally terminated with the destruction of the city in the first years of the seventeenth century. Third, because the region was desolate and deserted, the stones have been preserved in situ for nearly 380 years.

Though the tradition of large stone grave-markers was continued by the resettled inhabitants at New Julfa, the style of the thousands in the cemetery of the Isfahan suburb was apparently changed and the stones were placed flat rather than upright as on the Arax (48). The Julfa *xač'k'ars* represent as a group the last great flourishing of a sculptural art that in its duration, its elaborateness, its consummate mastery, and its enormous quantity is unique in the history of world art. It is unfortunate that political conditions have not permitted the proper study or publication of this important mass of post-renaissance art. Like the great medieval capital of Ani, uncared for and abandoned in Turkish occupied Armenia just across the Soviet Armenian-Turkish border, the ruins of the city of Julfa and its cemetery remain neglected and virtually unknown to art history and civilization. One of the purposes of this modest study is to draw attention to this unnecessary neglect.

It is a hazardous undertaking to analyze the art and iconography of the brief chapter that Julfa represents in the long history of

Art and Culture, vol. III, New York, 1944, pp. 46-127 (in Armenian), English trans. without plates, New York, 1944, pp. 30-54; B. Aṙak'elyan, *Haykakan patkera-k'andaknera 4-7-rd d.d. (Armenian Figural Sculpture from the Fourth to the Seventh Centuries)*, Erevan, 1949; see also N. Stepanian and A. Tchkmaktchian, *l'Art décoratif de l'Arménie médiévale* (Leningrad, 1971).

(47) Ališan, *Sisakan*, *passim*, mentions several.

(48) Carswell, *New Julfa*, *passim*, and pl. 96, a view of the cemetery. However, vestiges of the old Julfa style is preserved in a series of small *xač'k'ars* on the walls of the church of St. James at New Julfa, Carswell, pl. 16, figs. c-f, pl. 17, fig. e.

Armenian art on the basis of a group of 38 photographs taken by Jurgis Baltrušaitis 55 years ago. The authors are fully aware of this but since no attempt has been made to discuss this art, with the exception of older, somewhat obscure, and vague works in Russian or Armenian (49), it was felt that a preliminary survey based on these unpublished photographs would be appropriate to the memory of Haġg Berbérian, who was always interested in the most neglected and obscure aspects of Armenian studies.

In the fall of 1928, while on a research mission to look for precursors of romanesque art in Soviet Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, Baltrušaitis was afforded the opportunity to visit the famous site of old Julfa. His guide was Ašxarabek K'alant'ar, friend and associate of Nikolas Marr, T'oros T'oramanian, Josef Orbeli and other scholars who worked on the famous excavations of Ani just before and during the First World War. The trip to Julfa was made on horseback (because of the lack of other transport) from the closest railroad station. The singular photograph of the mounted Baltrušaitis before the cemetery (Fig. 1) is eloquent testimony to the adventure surrounding the entire expedition. In the following year Baltrušaitis's first major book on Armenian and Georgian art was published (50). In that volume one of the photos taken at Julfa, a xač'k'ar of 1596, appeared (pl. xxiv, fig. 41). In the ensuing years, the others were carefully preserved, waiting for the appropriate moment for their study and publication.

As complementary material to the study of the Baltrušaitis archive we have selectively augmented our photos with mostly unpublished ones from other sources. These do not include examples from the Vruyr archive in Erevan, since we did not have access to it; however, already published photos from the Vruyr archive have been carefully cited in our notes. In addition architect Herman Vahramian of Milan has put at our disposal photographs both old and recent from his collection (51). Finally, Adriano Alpago-Novello has

(49) The works of Marr cited in note 3, and those in note 45. A serious, systematic study of the history and artistic development of the Armenian xač'k'ar still waits to be written.

(50) J. Baltrušaitis, *Etudes sur l'art médiéval en Géorgie et en Arménie*, Paris, 1929, the preface by Henri Focillon, pp. VII-XV, provides more details.

(51) These latter have been published in part in the volumes *Documents, Khatchkar*, 1969, and the exhibition catalogue *Khatchkar*, see *supra* note 45. To the best of our knowledge the photos supplied by H. Vahramian (Figs. 2, 3, 9 e-f, 12, 13, 22 c, 23 a, c, d, 27, 28) have never been previously published.

made available material from the 1970s now part of the archives of the Centro Studi e Documentazione della Cultura Armena of Milan.

Various scholars have described the characteristic features of Julfa xac'k'ars: narrower and more elongated than those of other



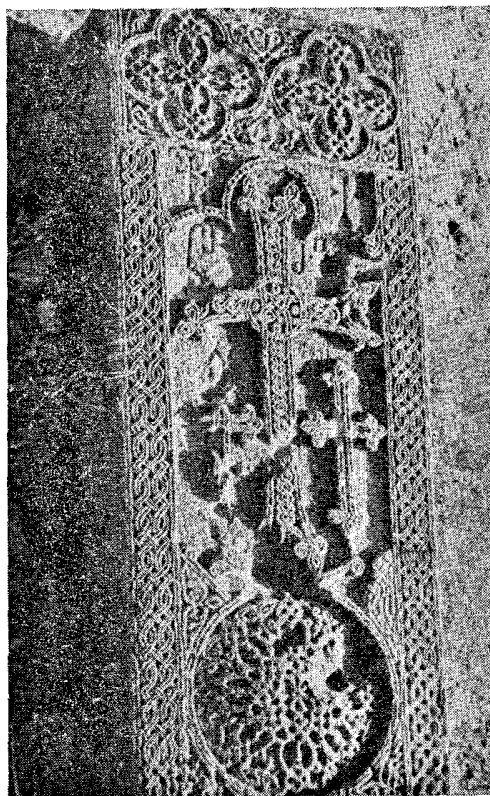
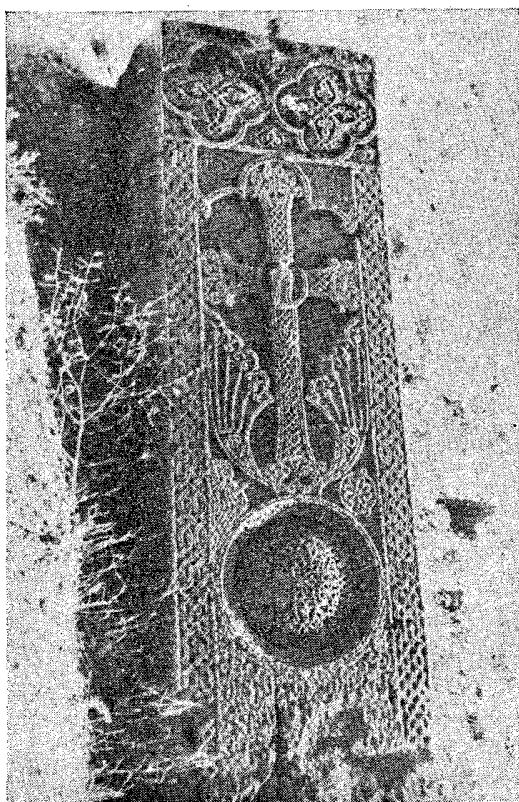
FIGS. 10-11. Julfa, xac'k'ars of 1556 and 1560. Photos Baltrušaitis.

regions, with the central cross enclosed in a pointed mihrab-like arch in high relief against the cut-away background, and sometimes bearing, at the bottom, the figure of a horse and rider (52). The discussion

(52) S. Barxudaryan, *Miḡnadaryan hay čartarapetner ev k'argorc varpetner* (*Medieval Armenian Architects and Master Masons*), Erevan, 1963, pp. 169; Azaryan, *Armenian Khatchkars*, p. 31; Ieni, *Khatchkar Catalogue*, p. 17.

below is intended to present a more complete though tentative schema for the organization into types of the Julfa tombstones.

By their basic shape the monuments at Julfa can be immediately divided into two: first, the traditional rectangular monolith (Figs. 5-23,



FIGS. 12-13. Xač'k'ars 1564 and 1560. Photos courtesy of H. Vahramian, Milan.

30-31), measuring from two to nearly four meters in height and one meter in width (more than 95 per cent of all monuments belong to this group which are properly xač'k'ars); second, a type unique to Julfa, a free standing sculpture in the round representing a ram (Figs. 24-29). This latter group will be discussed separately at the end of this study.

The first and larger series has been organized in rough chronological order based on the reading of inscriptions as they appear on the

photos (53). This arrangement is possible because in principle the Julfa xač'k'ars were consistently dated. Within this loose chronological progression the varieties of cross stones are divided and sub-divided into categories according to iconographic rather than stylistic differences.

Nearly a century ago Ališan had speculated on dates as early as the seventh, eighth, and twelfth centuries for the oldest of the xač'k'ars (54). One of those used for his hypothesis of the «twelfth century» is illustrated in *Sisakan* (55); the same stone was photographed by Baltrušaitis (Fig. 20). Clearly it is not from the twelfth century, but rather the late sixteenth and from among the very last series produced (56). Among the inscriptions Ališan published in full, the earliest are from the 1540s — 1545, 1546, 1550 — but unfortunately none of the xač'k'ars bearing these dates is illustrated by him (57). Our own examination of the 1928 photos has revealed only one tombstone of the fifteenth century, that of 1494 (Fig. 5), after which there is a hiatus of half a century to 1546 (Fig. 6), 1550 (Fig. 7), and 1551 (Fig. 8). The oldest, which is dated 1494, shows a plaited cross rendered spontaneously, but rather loosely, with naive birds (Fig. 5), recalling the provincial style in early Armenian manuscripts (58). Those of the mid-sixteenth century already begin to show a movement toward surface organization characteristic of the developed Julfan style, but still without the intrusion of elaborate human or animal representations. The carving is also of uniform, rather low relief. The arch above the the inner cross is not yet pointed, but the top band is formed of a dexterous geometric plait.

(53) A systematic, on-site survey of inscriptions would produce an inestimable historical and sociological profile of the city and a near ideal view of the artistic development of this special sculptural tradition; see note on p. 53.

(54) Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 424, see note 14 *supra*. We do not wish to totally discount such an early dating, but without specifically recorded inscriptions or photographs, it is hard to accept those before the fifteenth century.

(55) Ališan, *Sisakan*, fig. 125, reference, p. 127.

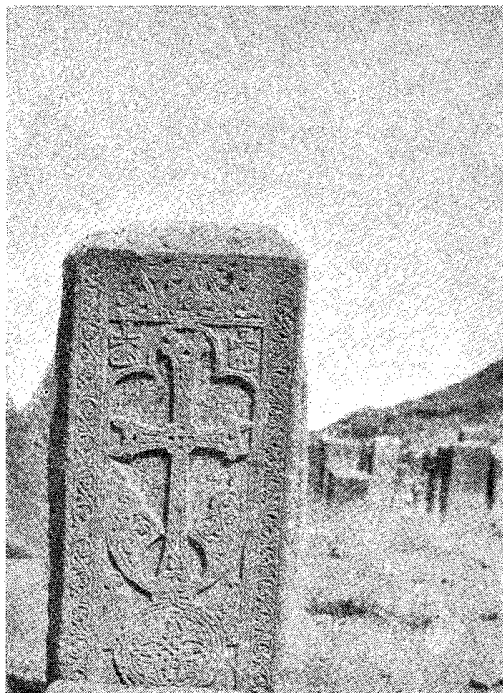
(56) Compare to the xač'k'ars of 1601-2, *infra*, and Figs. 23f, 30, 31; the enclosing four pointed star or lozenge patterns, on two or three levels of relief, are characteristic of this last period of decoration.

(57) Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 422; the full texts of some 30 inscriptions are given.

(58) On this style, see D. Kouymjian, «The Classical Tradition in Armenian Art», *REArm*, 15, (1981), pp. 263-287, discussion on style, pp. 276 ff., such birds are illustrated in eleventh century manuscripts, figs. 13-14.



14



15



16



17

FIGS. 14-17. 14. Julfa, xac'k'ars, middle one dated 1574. 15-16. Dated 1579.
17. Date effaced, to right, xac'k'ar of pre-1550. Photos Baltrušaitis.

The *xač'k'ar* of 1556 (Fig. 10) departs in several ways from the previous series. The central cross and two smaller crosses stand in sharp high relief against the cut-away background, the encompassing arch has been split into a trilobe affair; the effigy of the deceased, in a very provincial style, is given a conspicuous central position in the general arrangement. A *xač'k'ar* dated 1560 (Fig. 11) confirms this design tendency. In our series the earliest readably dated stone to display the characteristic disc or rosette below the cross is of 1574 (Fig. 14). After this date, the disc, ever more elaborately carved, is never absent from the fundamental design of the Julfa *xač'k'ars*.

The deep relief and the rosette below the cross ushered in the fully developed Julfa *xač'k'ar* style, previously characterized by narrowness and height, deep carving, and the pointed ogival arch, elements that converge only in the 1570s. We shall return to the classification of these cross stones shortly.

This mature style or arrangement of the Julfa *xač'k'ars* flourished for the relatively short period of 25 to 30 years. Its evolution must have passed through a very rapid development within the ateliers of masons and sculptors working in the city. The hundreds, perhaps originally thousands, of stones attributable by either date or iconographic and stylistic analogy to the last quarter of the sixteenth century not only overwhelms the viewer by their sheer quantity, but also raises some questions about the sociological context in which they were executed.

As has been suggested already, the number of visible *xač'k'ars* in the cemetery has varied in estimate from 2,000 to 10,000 in the accounts of travellers from the sixteenth to the late nineteenth centuries. The majority visible in photographs and discernable by type, seem to belong to the period from the 1570s to 1604; these number in the hundreds. Many of them and others recorded by inscription are on the graves of wealthy merchants, the *xōjays* (59). What

(59) On *xōjays* and the general question of the merchant class see Kouymjian, in *Histoire des Arméniens*, pp. 358-361; H. S. Anasyan, *XVII dari azatagrakan šar-zumnern arevmtyan Hayastanum (XVIIth Century Liberation Movements in Western Armenia)*, Erevan, 1961, pp. 59-63; most recently Hagop Barsoumian, «The Dual Role of the Armenian *Amira* Class within the Ottoman Government and the Armenian *Millet* (1750-1850)», in Benjamin Braude and Bernard Lewis, editors, *Christians and Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, New York-London, 1982, vol. I, pp. 171-2.



a

b

FIGS. 18a-b. Julfa, xač'k'ar of 1579.
Photos Baltrušaitis.



a

b

c

FIGS. 19a-c. Julfa, xač'k'ar of 1585.
Photos Baltrušaitis.

could have been the actual population of Julfa to have produced so many prominent deaths in such a short period? Apparently more than the estimated 2,000 or 3,000 households rendering a population

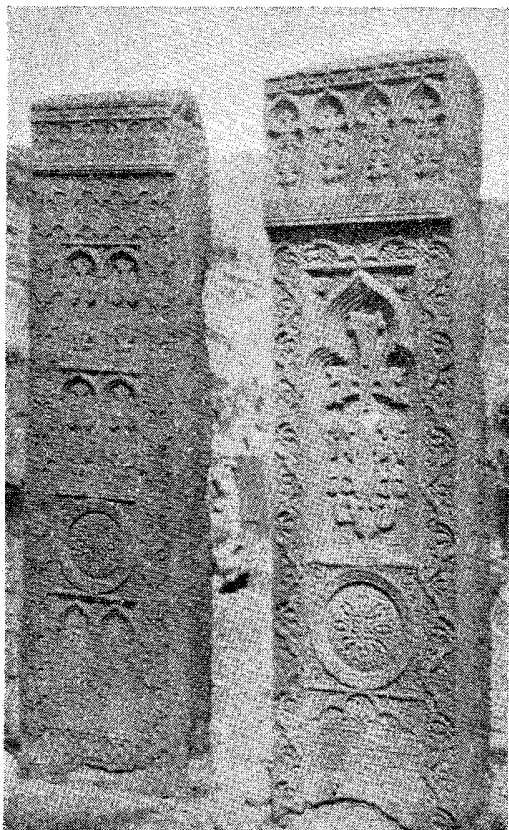


FIG. 20. Julfa, xach'kar, undated, compare left one to Ališan, *Sisakan*, fig. 125.
Photo Baltrušaitis.

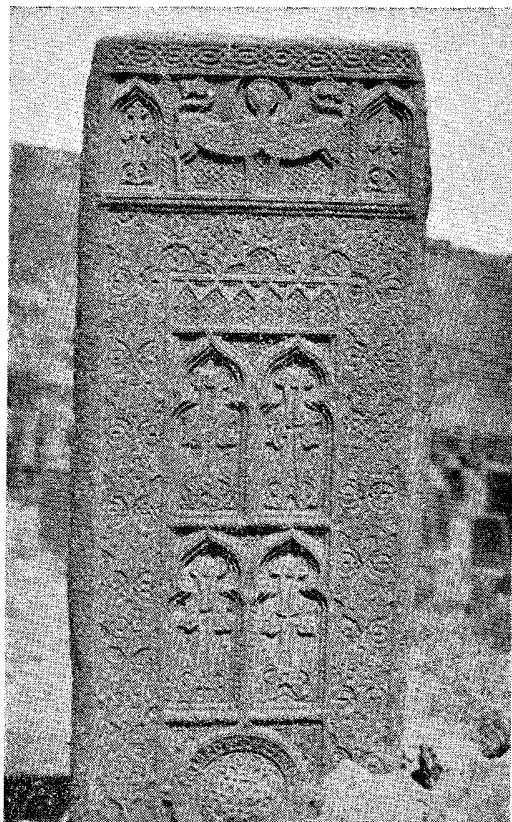


FIG. 21. Julfa, xach'kar with fabulous animal, undated.
Photo Baltrušaitis.

of 15,000 to 20,000 souls, for in the inscriptions there are almost no female names. Furthermore, many of the Julfa merchants in the late sixteenth and first years of the seventeenth centuries died while on business trips. Ališan has recorded those who were buried in Venice, and Surmēean has given us the record of Aleppo where the grave stones prior to the first quarter of the seventeenth century in the

Armenian cemeteries are overwhelmingly of men from Julfa (60). Once again a thorough study and recording of the Julfa material will provide clearer indications on this question and may force an upward reestimation of the population of the town and its environs at its most prosperous moment (61).

The trade and travel east and west, north and south, resulted in the influx of luxury items for the decoration of local households obliquely referred to by Aṛak'el during the great reception for Shah 'Abbās in 1603 (62). Perhaps motifs on imported objects and textiles may have provided the inspirations for some of the stone carvings in the cemetery, but close examination suggests little that could not have evolved indigenously in the intensely creative atmosphere of the stone workshops developed through the artistic, if somewhat morbid, patronage of the wealthy Julfa families for the decoration of the graves of their prominent dead. Surely the Julfa cemetery, with its geographically visible position in relationship to the city, the river, and the mountains, must have been the most important attraction of the area, a place to display the badges of a family's wealth and importance. Though manuscript production increased in the late sixteenth century and though several miniaturists are known from Julfa — including a rare female artist of the fifteenth century, a certain Mariam (63), and of course the great master of the period of grandeur, Yakob Ĵulayec'i (64) — the development of a Julfa school of manuscript painters or architects did not materialize in any way comparable to that of the team of sculptors involved in the xač'k'ar industry.

The great stone slabs were carved on a single side as was the accepted tradition of Armenian xač'k'ars. They were also oriented on the customary east-west axis. The sight of the hundreds of artistic reliefs

(60) See *supra*, notes 22-3.

(61) Perhaps closer to the 40,000 suggested by one of the sources used by Ališan, *supra*, note 27.

(62) Aṛak'el, *Patmut'iwn*, p. 16; Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 414; Leo, *Patmut'yun*, III, pp. 238-9; *Hay žolovordi patmut'yun*, IV, pp. 95 ff.

(63) A. Eremyan, «Tasnħingerord dari mi anhayt nkarč'uhi (An Unknown Fifteenth Century Paintress)», *Ējmiacin* (1952), July, pp. 48-50, cf. Xač'ikyan, *XVth Century Colophons*, vol. II, p. 64, no. 89.

(64) On Yakob/Hakob see Irina Drambyan, «Hakob Ĵulayec'u manrankarneri patkeragrut'yunə (The Iconography of Hakob of Julfa's Miniatures)», *Banber Matenadarani*, 10 (1971), pp. 171-184 with Russian and French résumés; more recently, S. Der Nersessian, *Armenian Art*, London, 1978, pp. 236-240.

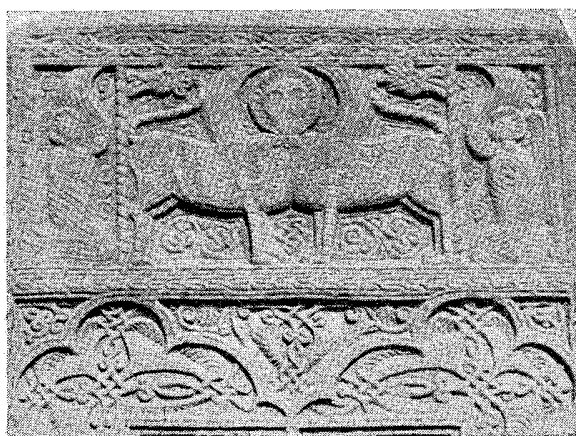
(Figs. 2-4, 249, 25) must have been a wonderful aesthetic experience to all who viewed it.

The long rectangular surface was treated with a precise program. Representational scenes when they begin to appear in the 1570s are relegated to the very top band (Figs. 21-23) or a space at the bottom of the stone or both (Figs. 30-31). They, along with intricate vertical interlaces on each side, served as natural frames for the central cross motif. The upper representational relief, that which extended toward the heavens, was appropriately decorated with Christ or the Virgin or with a fabulous zoomorphic figure. The lower image was consistently a picture of the deceased shown as a mounted warrior or warrior-saint (St. George?), close to the ground (Figs. 19c, 30, 31), almost touching the earth where the body itself was interred; an adjacent inscription identified the person. More rarely a restrained banquet scene is shown in its place, presumably a kind of celestial repass. Earlier, on stones from the 1550s to the 1570s, the deceased was often diminutively represented in a pious stance with hands crossed over the breast (Figs. 9a-9e).

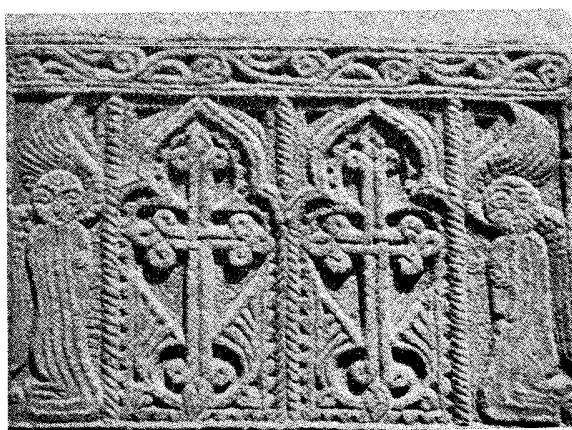
The typical inscriptional formula read «this cross is in memory of *xōj̄ay...*» The date was sometimes rendered together with the inscription, but usually, and especially in the late period, indicated in the flat recessed areas of the cross design in the usual Armenian formula: the word «date» and three digits (expressed in letters) indicating the year in the Armenian era (Fig. 28). In the final stage of development the date formula was indicated in the corners formed by the rosette inscribed in a square starting in the upper left hand corner with the abbreviation for «date» and moving around clockwise in each corner (Fig. 19c, 31) (65).

Let us return now to the classification of the *xač'k'ars* during the epogee of their execution, the final decades of the sixteenth century. The cross stones of this period can be divided into those with a patterned top band (Figs. 10-20) and those with a representational one (Figs. 21-23, 30, 31). The former, without figures, are the most common and appear in a large number of different designs and effects. In this study their subdivisions will not be discussed. The figural group

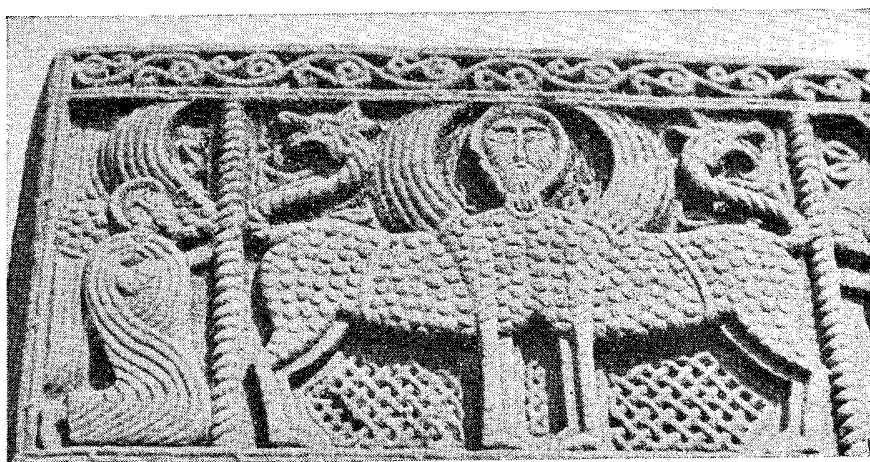
(65) Most easily seen on the famous *xač'ak'ar* of 1602 (our Fig. 31) now in Eĵmīacin, *Armenian Khatchkars*, 1973, figs. 196, 198. It should be noted, however, that this order was not always followed and often the letters forming the date are scattered about.



22 a



22 d



22 b



22 c

FIGS. 22a-d. Julfa, xač'k'ars with fabulous animal, undated.
Photos a, b, d. Baltrušaitis; c. courtesy of H. Vahramian, Milan.

separates into two very noticeable types by the subject depicted within the horizontal upper band: (1) with a strange animal figure flanked by angels or crosses (Figs. 21-22), and (2) with Christ in glory or judgement together with either the symbols of the animals of the apocalypse or the four Evangelists joined by angels (Figs. 23a-f). The former theme seems to predate the latter.

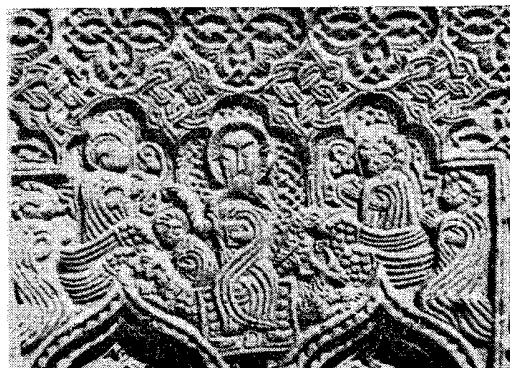
The photographic material available to us allows for the identification of twelve individual *xač'k'ars* of the first or animal type (66), three of which are in the Baltrušaitis archive (Figs. 21, 22a-b). Though none of the latter provides a date, a previously published example is from the year 1579 (67). The motif that attracts immediate attention on all twelve of these stones is a figure composed of a pair of confronted quadrupeds, bodies in profile merging into a single frontally facing and bearded human head. It appears to have a halo. The animal is winged like a griffon and has a body covered with scales rather than hair. Each body has a tail represented as a thickly twined rope, curved back and around and ending in a dragon's head. This upper band is divided into three unequal sections with the smaller side compartments containing one of two variants. The dated specimen has crosses within pointed arches; there are four more similar to it in our sampling (Fig. 21) (68). The other seven have on each side a kneeling winged angel (Figs. 22a-c) facing toward the two-bodied creature (69).

(66) Baltrušaitis, three; Ališan, *Sisakan*, fig. 127; one in the Vahramian archive (our Fig. 22c); the rest (probably after photographs of Vruyr, Arutjunjan and Sarafjan), *Pamjatniki*, fig. 175, Onnig Avédissian, *Peintres et sculpteurs arméniens*, Cairo, 1959, p. 131 right, with a mounted figure at the bottom, *Documents, Khatchkar*, fig. 54, same reproduced in *Hay žolovordi patmut'yun*, IV, p. 584, Mnac'akan, *N. Marə*, p. 177 right, Ayvazyan, *Pamjatniki Naxičevanskoj ASSR*, fig. 37b; see also the two visible in the ensemble photo, Barxudaryan, *Architects and Master Masons*, fig. 88. The illustrations in Ter-Avetisjan, *Gorod Džuga*, were not consulted, *supra* note 1.

(67) The grave of a certain Sölt'an Valē, Ališan, *Sisakan*, fig. 127, inscription, p. 427; same stone in Avédissian, *Peintres et sculpteurs*, p. 131. The central motif represents a pair of very long crosses each in its own ogival niche; below is a carved rosette and a rider. On each side of the fantastic animal is a cross in a niche.

(68) Baltrušaitis, one (Fig. 21); Mnac'akanyan, *N. Marə*, p. 177; *Documents, Khatchkar*, fig. 54, two examples, same Vruyr photo in *Hay žolovordi patmut'yun*, IV, p. 584, two examples one with a banquet scene and one with a rider at the bottom.

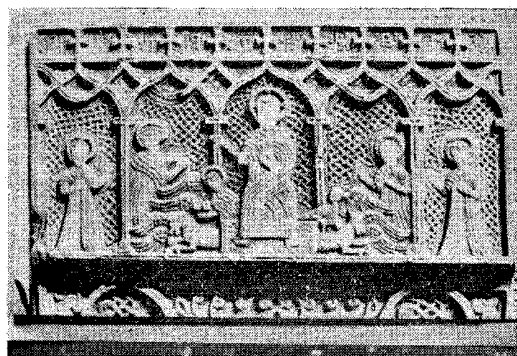
(69) Baltrušaitis, two (Figs. 22a-b); Vahramian, one (Fig. 22c); Ališan, *Sisakan*, fig. 122; Arutjunjan-Sarafjan, *Pamjatniki*, fig. 175; Barxudaryan, *Architects and Master Masons*, fig. 88; Ayvazyan, *Pamjatniki Naxičevanskoj ASSR*, fig. 37b.



23 a



23 b



23 c



23 d



23 e



23 f

FIGS. 23 a-f. Julfa, details of top band of xač'k'ars with Christ. a-d. undated, e. 1597, f. 1602, detail of Fig. 30. Photos a, c, d. H. Vahramian, Milan; b, e. Baltrušaitis; f. after *Khatchkar Exhibition*, Centro Documentazione Armena, Milan.

Without entering into an elaborate iconographic study of this motif, an undertaking requiring a separate monograph based on a larger sampling of data than available for this study, several observations need be made. The confronted doublebodied animal with human head is an unusual creature in Armenian and in fact Near Eastern art. There exist in Armenian illuminations examples of confronted birds with a single head, and animal-headed human figures, but there is only one example known to us, sculpted on the thirteenth century

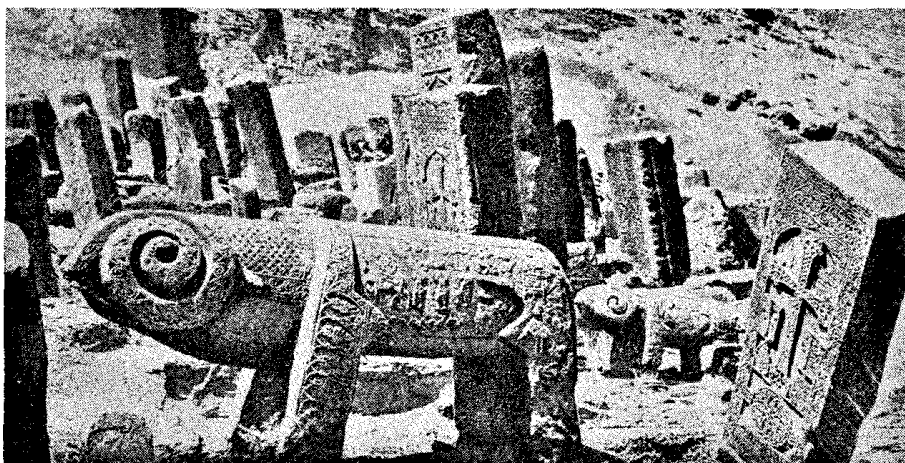


FIG. 24a. Julfa cemetery, ram stone of Manuk Nazar dated 1578. Photo of Mme Chantre of 1890 courtesy of Centro Documentazione Armena, Milan.

century monastery of Nor Varag, like the combination of animal and human witnessed on the Julfa stones (70). On the other hand, from the neighboring northern region of Dagestan on the Caspian littoral there are confronted lions with a single, though in this case,

(70) It is a near identical figure, though crowned and rendered in an entirely different style, carved within an elongated hexagon, part of an intricate design above the principal western entrance of the church of Mother of God (Astuacacin) at this Armenian monastic complex in the north. It was built between 1227 and 1237. The relief sculpture with hybrid animal has just been published, Hrač'ya K'artašyan, «Nor Varagavank'i čartarapetakan hamalirə», *Lraber* (1984), no. 7, p. 70, fig. 5. For bird examples, see A. Mnac'akanyan, *Haykakan zardarvest*, Erevan, 1955, figs. 734-737, 760. On animal head figures see, D. Kouymjian, «The Problem of the Zoomorphic Figure in the Iconography of Armenian Pentecost», *Atti del Primo Simposio de Arte Armena*, Venice, 1978, pp. 403-413.

animal head on the sides of a carved stone pulpit or staircase (71). Winged lions or griffon-like animals are found on the tops of decorated headpieces in thirteenth century Armenian manuscripts (72); these may be vaguely associated with the Julfa animal.

The tail ending in a dragon's head is well known in Armenian art from the twelfth to the fifteenth century (73) and is found



FIG. 24b. Ram stone of Manuk Nazar of 1578, overturned. Photo Baltrušaitis.

in the neighboring Islamic tradition of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; one of us in previously recording western examples of this

(71) The Louvre has a fine collection of these Dagestani stone reliefs; the pulpit was displayed during the 1977 exhibition «l'Islam dans les collections nationales» in the Grand Palais and again in 1981-2 during an exhibit «L'Orient des croisades» in the Musée d'art et d'essai.

(72) See for example the two above the headpiece of St. Mark, one with a human head, in the Gospel of 1262 by T'oros Roslin, Baltimore, Walters Art Gallery, MS W. 539, fol. 131, S. Der Nersessian, *Armenian Manuscripts in the Walters Art Gallery*, Baltimore, 1973, pl. 62, fig. 89.

(73) See examples from manuscripts in Mnac'akanyan, *Armenian Decorative Art*, figs. 725, 729, 732, 1101-1103.

sagittarius figure has discussed its meaning in both east and west (74). Parallel motifs are known in Armenian and Georgian miniatures in which a feline body with a human torso and a crowned head is represented executing a Parthian shot at the menacing open mouth dragon at the end of the creature's own tail (75). However, this species is found in a secular context, whereas the Julfa composite animal like that at Nor Varag is in a clearly religious one, probably signifying,

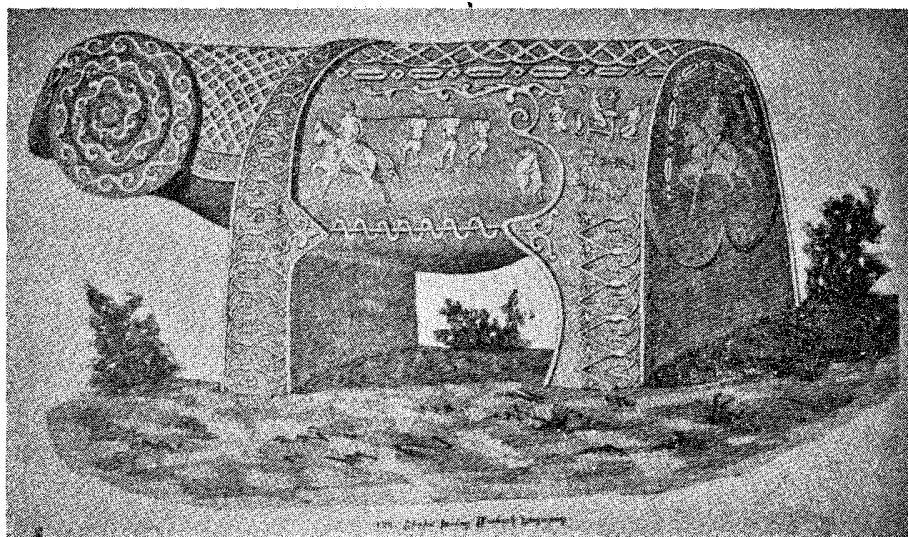


FIG. 24c. Engraving of ram stone of Manuk Nazar of 1578. Photo after Ališan, *Sisakan*, fig. 128.

by analogy to the Christ motif which follows it, the resurrection of the soul through the risen Christ. It is probable, what with the attendant angels and the halo of the animal in the Julfa examples, and the location at the very entrance of the church in the Nor Varag

(74) For instance, on coins of the Artukid dynasty of the twelfth century similar to Armenian motifs discussed in the following note. For an illustration of the Artukid type as well as western varieties with a discussion, see J. Baltrušaitis, *Le Moyen Age fantastique, Antiquités et exotismes dans l'art gothique*, new edition, Paris, 1981, pp. 130-132, fig. 95A.

(75) The examples are similar to the Artukid coin types and those on twelfth and thirteenth century Islamic bronzes. The famous Georgian example is from an astronomy book of 1188, S. Amiranašvili, *Gruzinskaja miniatjura*, Moscow, 1966, fig. 56, also in Mnac'akanyan, *Armenian Decorative Art*, fig. 1105; the Armenian example is in Matenadaran, MS 3884 of 1461-1478, Mnac'akayan, fig. 1104.

one, that the hybrid figure functions as a symbol of salvation. Indeed, this is the basic theme of the cross that forms the central motif and provides the essential *raison d'être* of xač'k'ars. If we were to apply our earlier explanation of the sagittarian figure to the one found on the church and Julfa monuments, we would speak of a union of heaven and earth represented by a combination of the celestial Christ and the terrestrial dragon (76).

Further typological classifications of this variety are no doubt possible, but additional refinement will have to await more data. As for the second type with Christ, we have noted nine examples of which only three have discernable dates: 1597 (Fig. 23e) and two of 1602 (Figs. 23f, 30) (77). Among the undated ones there is a wide variety of interior modifications. The very arrangement of figures suggests a progression from an original, archaic formula. It is possible that this group may have developed independently of the previous animal style, rather than being a chronologically later substitute for it.

The first of the three dated examples is the clearest in terms of its interpretation. Christ is seated on a throne composed in part of the four symbolic animals of the apocalypse. Unfortunately the Baltrušaitis photo (Fig. 23e) of the upper part records only the date of 1597, but leaves us in doubt about the configuration of the rest of the carving. Presumably it is like that of 1602 found in the Ališan-Milan photograph (Fig. 30). The 1597 motif is flanked on three sides by a carefully carved inscription. On the left and right are crosses in niches, Christ is also in a polylobed niche. In the Ališan-Milan example (Fig. 23f, detail), the two side crosses have been suppressed to expand the design outward. Kneeling angels with wings, reminiscent of those in the doubled-bodied animal type, have been added. The sun and moon together with a non-symmetrical arabesque background gives this work a special allure. The final dated example is one of the most

(76) Balturšaitis, *Le Moyen Age fantastique*, pp. 131-2.

(77) Baltrušaitis, two (Figs. 23b, c). one of which is dated 1597 (Fig. 23e); Vahramian, five (Figs. 23a, c, d); the one of 1602 (our Fig. 31) is now in Ėjmiacin, *Documents, Khatchkar*, figs. 56-7, *Armenian Khatchkars*, figs. 196-198, *Khatchkar, Catalogue*, fig. 51, see also *infra* note 78; Ališan, *Sisakan*, fig. 124, modern photo in *Khatchkar, Catalogue*, fig. 26 (our Fig. 30), also dated 1602; Ališan, fig. 129; Barxudaryan, *Xorhrdayin hayastani nyut'akan kuldurayi hušarjannerə*, Erevan, 1935, fig. 56; another of this variety may be concealed in the poor photo in Ayvazyan, *Pamjatniki*, fig. 39b, which appears to be like the central xač'k'ar of fig. 56 in the third edition of *Documents, Khatchkar*, Milan, 1977.

famous of all xač'k'ars from Julfa, for it is preserved at Holy Etchmiadzin in Armenia and has been reproduced dozens of times (Fig. 31). On this exquisite relief of 1602, executed by the master Grigor (78), the band has been further expanded laterally to create the most sophisticated variation of the type. Two additional angels have also been added.

The undated examples fall into arcaded and non-arcaded groups. The latter (Fig. 23a) is represented by a single stone in which the lateral band has been substituted by an allover design in which the spaces are filled by Christ, the angel, eagle, lion and ox of the apocalypse and four angels. Below are two crosses individually contained in extremely pointed mihrab-like niches, probably representing just two of four on the entire stone as found on other xač'k'ars of this type. The remaining ones (79), are themselves divided into two groups, two showing a central motif similar to the Baltrušaitis 1597 xač'k'ar, but with the addition of cherubims above the arcades enclosing Christ's head (Fig. 23b). On the sides are two pairs of crosses, each enclosed in a pointed niche. The others (Figs. 23c-d) show the band arranged in a series of uniformly sized single pointed Gothic-like arcades interlaced with a flowing band. Little crosses surmount each of the points so formed. In addition to the central Christ of the previous examples, four haloed, male saints turning toward Christ are introduced, one to an arcade, surely representing the four Evangelists (80). On two of these, the figure to the right of Christ is young and unbearded. This arrangement recalls the scene of Christ in Glory or the Second Coming in fifteenth and sixteenth century Armenian miniatures where Jesus is seated on the throne of tetramorphs, the symbols of the Evangelists. In Armenian examples of the period, Christ is usually flanked by the Virgin and John the Baptist. But the basic configuration of the heads of the tetramorph and especially the parallel lines of their wings,

(78) See previous note. Recently an attempt has been made to assign meaning to the esoteric numerical values of the inscription of «Grigor varpet», the sculptor of the xač'k'ar, Cik Damadian, «Essai de décodage d'une croix de pierre», *The Second International Symposium on Armenian Art, Yerevan, 12-15 September 1978*, Erevan, 1981, vol. III, pp. 103-114.

(79) Baltrušaitis, one; Vahramian, five, including the one with the all over design; Vruyr in Barxudaryan, *Hušarjannerə*, fig. 56.

(80) Vahramian, three examples (our Figs. 23c-d); Ališan, *Sisakan*, fig. 129; Barxudaryan, *Hušarjannerə*, fig. 56, which appears to replace the Evangelists with kneeling angels, at least at the extremities, also the row of crosses above the arcade is lacking.

spread to right and left, recall the Julfa xač'k'ars. Scenes of the Ascension and Last Judgement also show the same arrangement, sometimes with the addition of cherubim (81). Those xač'k'ars with the Evangelists and the four creatures forming Christ's throne grouped together invoke both the Gospels and the apocalyptic vision.

An earlier variety of the «cross» type may have served in part as a transition to the xač'k'ars with Christ and the Evangelists' symbols in the upper band. Baltrušaitis (Fig. 19b detail) and others have recorded several that introduce into each of the quadrants of the central cross one of the four symbols: angel, lion, ox, eagle (82). There are also a number of other varieties of the xač'k'ar from this period, the decade of the 1580s, but they are seemingly less common. Their motifs include the Virgin and child, the Virgin and the magi, Christ alone, the bust of Christ in the center of the main cross (Fig. 19b), and figures arranged vertically along the two sides of the stone (83). The preponderant majority, however, of the gravestones shows elaborations of the cross design, multiplying their number in always new and creative ways. Seldom are two identical xač'k'ars to be seen. The innovative ingenuity and the obsessive passion to create ever new variations of the theme of the cross seem to have had no bounds at Julfa.

The final group of Julfa funerary monuments to be considered is the most unusual among the thousands executed there, and distinguishes this cemetery from all others. These are the ram-shaped sculptures alluded to earlier. Technically they are not xač'k'ars, since their main purpose is not support for a cross. The majority of those evident on the photographs have neither cross nor inscription nor any

(81) For an example very much like our central motif, see Mnac'akanyan, *Armenian Decorative Art*, p. 195, fig. 469, Erevan, Matenadaran, MS 6356 dated 1463. Examples of the motif in miniatures contemporary to the Julfa monuments can be found in Hravard Hakopian, *Armenian Miniatures, Vaspourakan*, Erevan, 1978, trilingual edition, fig. 85, 1571 A.D. from Bałeš; fig. 87, 1604 from Xizan; for an earlier example, Der Nersessian, *Walters*, fig. 211, Second Coming, fig. 209, Ascension, MS W543 of 1475.

(82) Two such stones can also be seen on a Vruyr photograph, *Documents, Khatchkar*, fig. 55, the same in Ayvazyan, *Pamjatniki*, fig. 37a.

(83) Bust of Christ and Virgin and Child on the same stones cited in the previous note; a xač'k'ar of 1603 with Christ in a small cartouch, *Armenian Khatchkars*, fig. 200; the Magi and other figures in a five-partite top band, Avédissian, *Peintres et sculpteurs*, p. 131 left; with eight vertical figures, four to a side, Ayvazyan, *Pamjatniki*, fig. 39a.



FIG. 25. Julfa, ram stone, as seen in the background of Chantre's photo, Fig. 24a.
Photo courtesy of Centro Documentazione Armena, Milan.

design (Fig. 29d); of the two dozen rams identified by the authors (84), thirteen are undecorated. Furthermore, the curious absence of crosses even on some of those that are highly decorated (Figs. 24-26), coupled with the secular motifs on several (Figs. 24, 25, 26a, 29a), puts the ram-shaped stones in a special category of tomb markers. At least one (Fig. 27), however, does have a cross prominently carved on its left side (85).

It is hard to place the ram stones in any meaningful chronological sequence by type. Three of them have readable dates: 1578 (Figs. 24a-c)



FIGS. 26a-b. Sardarabad, Armenia, Archaeological Museum, ram stone dated 1579, both sides. Photos D. Kouymjian.

1579 (Figs. 26a-b), and 1601 (Fig. 28) (86). Thus, their appearance coincides with the beginning of the flourishing period of Julfa xač'k'ars, and their production continues to the end. A common theme on them is a banquet scene (Figs. 24c, 25, 26a, 29a-b) with two or three

(84) Baltrušaitis, four; Vahramian, ten, more than half plain; Saradarabad Museum, Armenian S.S.R., one (our Figs. 26a-b); Ališan, *Sisakan*, fig. 128, same in *Khatchkar, Catalogue*, fig. 24 (also fig. 23); same in Mnac'akanyan, *Armenian Decorative Art*, fig. 733; Avédissian, *Peintres*, p. 127; *Documents, Khatchkar*, fig. 55, same in Ayvazyan, *Pamjatniki*, fig. 37a; *Documents, Khatchkar*, edition 1977, fig. 56.

(85) From the Vahramian archive, our Fig. 27.

(86) Ališan, *Sisakan*, fig. 128, reproduced in the original photo of Chantre taken in 1890 (our Fig. 24a) in *Khatchkar, Catalogue*, fig. 24, dated 1578; Sardarabad Museum, apparently unpublished, 1579 (our Figs. 26a-b); Vahramian, 1601 (our Fig. 28). Their appearance as a motif seems to coincide with the beginning of the period of stylistic expansion of the Julfa xač'k'ars as discussed above.

seated persons, a central figure, perhaps the deceased, being served by those in attendance on the sides (87). Vessels, including pitchers, and musical instruments are evident. In the middle of each such scene is a tree or branch, probably representing the tree of life in what is intended as a celestial banquet or, alternatively, the Armenian *hogečaš*, the repast for the soul (88). Such a scene was already observed on normal Julfa *xač'k'ars*, often displayed where a mounted figure might have been expected.

The ram stone with the most varied and unusual scenes was also the first to be published, as a photograph by Madame B. Chantre (Fig. 24a) in 1893. An engraving (Fig. 24c) of the same stone by Boscotti was used by Ališan in his *Sisakan* of 1893. The original Chantre view has been reproduced by Adriano Alpago-Novello and the Centro di Documenti Armena of Milan for its travelling photographic exhibit on Armenian *xač'k'ars*. The late Artashes Mnac'akanyan also reproduced Ališan's drawing in his study on Armenian decorative art (89). The fate of this remarkable monument has been uncertain until now despite the photograph published in the aforementioned exhibition catalogue (Fig. 25) purporting to be a modern on-site record of the same scene, for in this new photo it is the decorated ram in the background of Chantre's (cf. Figs. 24a, 25) that is shown rather than the one under consideration (90). Fortunately, a close examination of the Baltrušaitis archive has established clearly that sometime between 1891 and 1928 the ornate stone was overturned. It was photographed nearly upside down by Baltrušaitis (Fig. 24b) revealing the other side which appears undecorated. The *xač'k'ar* to the right of the ram allows us to be certain, for it is the same as the one in the Chantre photo.

The flattened rear of the ram in the Ališan engraving (Fig. 24c) shows a sword-bearing rider around whom is inscribed, «This is the

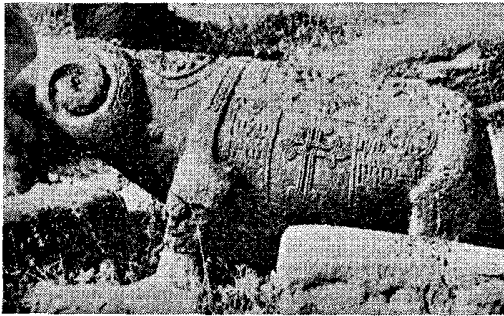
(87) Baltrušaitis, one or two examples (our Figs. 29a-b); the ram of 1578, Ališan-Chantre (our figs. 24a-c, 25), seems to have such a scene; Chantre and *Khatchkar*, *Catalogue*, fig. 23; Sardarabad of 1579 (Figs. 26a-b).

(88) Such a banquet scene with musicians is found on provincial styled *xač'k'ars* from other regions of Armenia, see for examples the illustrations accompanying Grigor Karaxanjan, «Muzykal'nye instrumenty na bytobyx rel'efax armėnii (XII-XVI veka)», *Second Symposium on Armenian Art*, pp. 377-383, figs. 167-169.

(89) Ališan, *Sisakan*, fig. 128; *Khatchkar*, *Catalogue*, fig. 24; Mnac'akanyan, *Armenian Deocrative Art*, fig. 733, our Fig. 24c. The original is in B. Chantre, *A travers l'Armėnie russe*, Paris, 1893, photo on p. 180.

(90) *Khatchkar*, *Catalogue*, fig. 23.

tomb of Manuk Nazar, 1578» (91). The elaborately decorated horns of this animal are found on other examples (Figs. 26a-b), including a fragment photographed by Baltrušaitis (Fig. 29c). The figures carved on the side of the animal (Figs. 24a, c) are, from left to right, a mounted person with a falcon on his left arm leading a string of three prisoners, two upright pigs or other animals dancing or embracing, three figures engaged in a banquet scene or in the preparation of one, the left hand person playing a stringed instrument, and just below them, a crowned



27



28

FIGS. 27. Julfa, ram stone with a cross, undated. 28. Julfa, ram stone dated 1601.
Photos courtesy of H. Vahramian, Milan.

human-headed bird so common in medieval Armenian art. Except for the three men tied at the neck with arms fastened behind their backs, all the images have parallels in other carved stones from the cemetery or in earlier works of Armenian art, even the dancing pigs (92).

There is too little evidence to offer an explanation for the presence of this unusual ram form in the Julfa graveyard. Marr said that such figures were widely known in an area stretching from the southern shores of the Caspian to the Chorokh river (93), but he did not offer

(91) «Ays ē hangist Manuk Nazarin, t'v RĠE [1027+551=1578]», Ališan, *Sisakan*, p. 424.

(92) Or at least embracing or wrestling, upright animals, Mnac'akanyan, *Armenian Decorative Art*, fig. 514, from Matenadaran MS 7451 of 1320, fig. 1054, from MS 3722 of 1304 executed in nearby Naxiĵewan.

(93) Quoted in Mnac'akanyan, *N. Marə*, pp. 167-8. Marco Brambilla reports that ram stones are found in an eighteenth century context in an Armenian ceme-

an explanation of their symbolic meaning. What rank, merit, or esoteric activity did a person have to have in order for his grave to be graced by a ram? For the moment we cannot say.

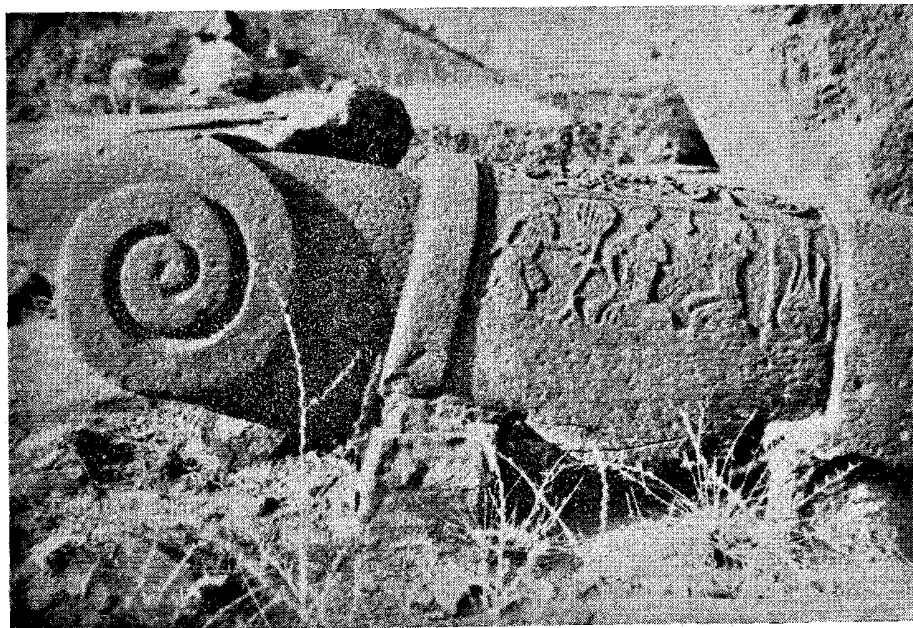
* * *

In summary, Julfa *xač'k'ars* in their earliest documented phase — the last years of the fifteenth to the mid-sixteenth century — display a style characterized by provincialism, lack of sophistication, and looseness, executed in rather low relief. Gradually, after the 1550s, the surface is ever more skillfully and innovatingly worked in deeper and deeper relief until the abrupt end of production in 1604. By the 1570s the pointed arch, an ancient element in Armenian as well as Islamic architecture, replaces the rounded one used previously at Julfa and elsewhere. In the earliest stages of the art, the deceased is not represented on the tombstones, but roughly from mid-century to the 1570s the person is sometimes depicted in a primitive and diminutive manner. These effigies were replaced in the late 1570s by a horseman, a motif already used in Armenian *xač'k'ars* in the thirteenth century and one that remained popular at Julfa to the end (94). A less frequent banquet scene appears at about the same time as the rider, but the two are not seen together on the same *xač'k'ar* (95). At the end of the 1570s a fabulous two-bodied animal with a single human face appears on the top band of some gravestones and in the 1580s the tetramorph, a combination of the symbols of the four Evangelists, is assimilated into the central cross on some monuments. In the late 1580s or early 1590s Christ enthroned, at times with the four Evangelists, replaces the strange animal in the upper band. Also in the 1570s a unique sculpted ram monument is introduced into the repertory of the cemetery; it remains popular to the end of Julfa's existence. And always there are the stones decorated only by crosses and geometric or geometrized floral designs. Throughout the history of the Julfa cemetery, these represent the majority of funerary monu-

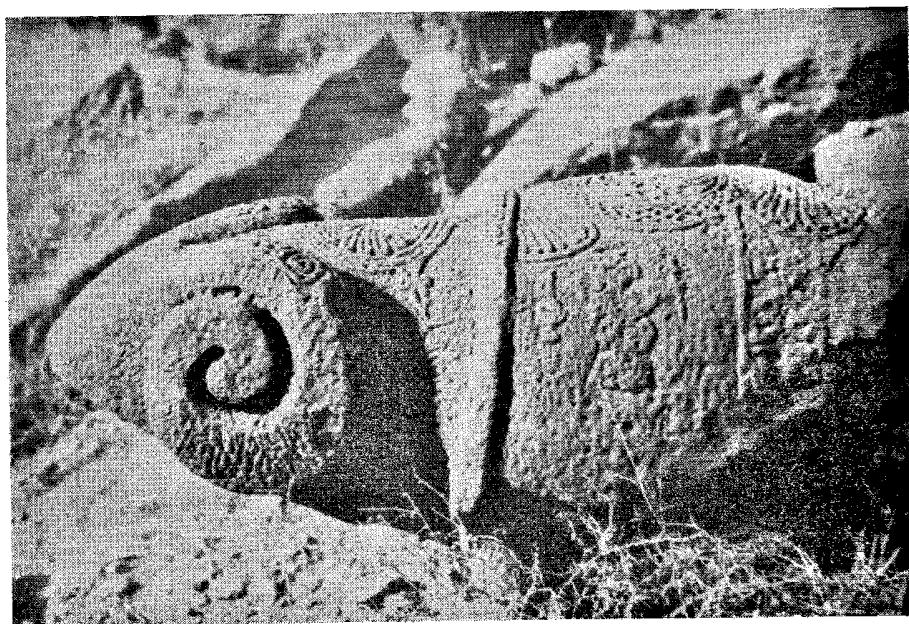
mentary at Mujumbar, north of Tabriz; he adds that similar rams with Persian inscriptions can be seen near mosques in the region of Khoy, Maku, and Salmast, probably later imitations of Armenian examples.

(94) The earliest example seems to be the *xač'k'ar* of 1233 of Grigor Xalbakian, brought to Ējmiacin from Imirzek; see *Armenian Khatchkars*, figs. 68-70.

(95) The only exception is the ram stone of 1578, Ališan-Chantre, *Sisakan*, fig. 128, our Figs. 24a-c.

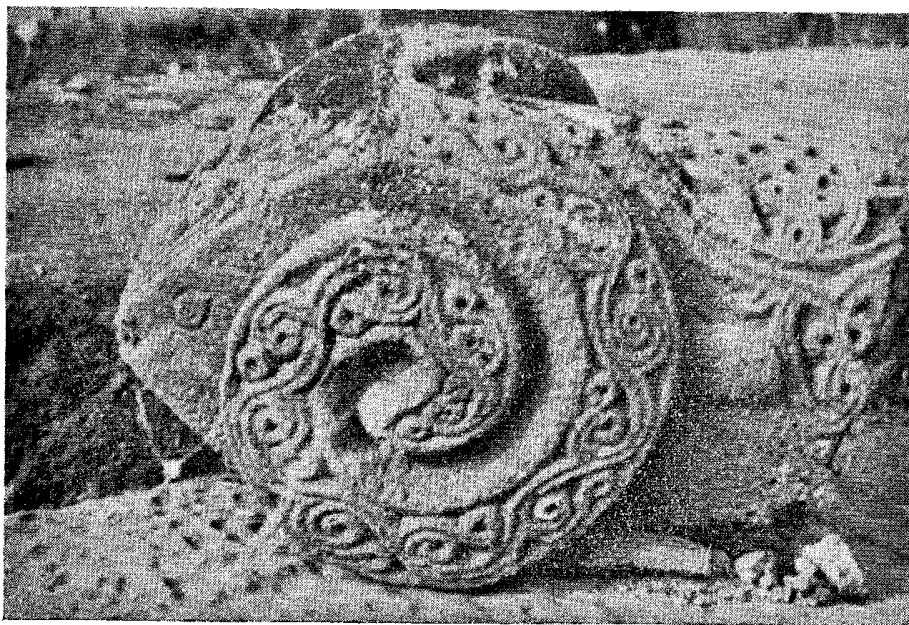


29 a



29 b

FIGS. 29a-d. Julfa, ram stones, all undated. a. with banquet scene, b. with part of banquet scene, c. ornate head, d. plain, standing before xač'k'ars and vestiges of a wall. Photos Baltrušaitis.



29 c



29 d

ments. The very last of them (Figs. 30-31) are carved on three, four, five, and more planes; they are impeccably sculpted with pronounced undercutting, displaying a mastery of stonework that is at times stupefying in its intricacy and near wonderful in its aesthetic harmony.

In this essay, besides publishing the valuable documents carefully assembled half a century ago by one of us, we have tried to underline the richness of this group of carved funerary monuments and their nearly inexhaustible potential for study and analysis. In addition to



FIG. 30. Julfa, xač'k'ar with Christ, sun and moon of 1602. Photo after *Khatchkar Exhibition*, Centro Documentazione Armena, Milan.

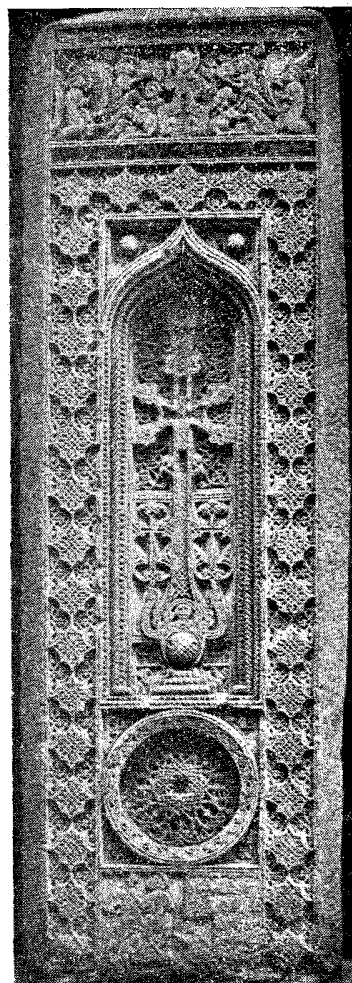


FIG. 31. Ējmiacin, xač'k'ar from Julfa of 1602 executed by master Grigor. Photo after *Armenian Khatchkars*, fig. 196.

the thorough archaeological survey we called for at the beginning of this study, we also suggest that a xač'k'ar museum be organized specifically for this material (96), perhaps at Julfa itself. For the moment one can only hope there is no further deterioration or abuse to the site and that the Azerbaijani authorities allow scholars to thoroughly survey the existing monuments in this Armenian region.

Additional note: While this volume was in press there appeared an important article on the Julfa funerary monuments: Suren Satumyan and Vardan Harut'yunyan, «Vimagrer Hin Ĵulayic' (Inscriptions from Old Julfa)», *Lraber* (1983), no. 12, pp. 42-61. Though it is impossible to include its findings within our study, it should be pointed out that the authors visited Julfa in 1976. They report counting nearly 3,000 xač'k'ars, and have published 81 of their inscriptions, the earliest of which is from 1501 and the latest from 1608.

(96) Apparently the idea was already hinted at by a westerner in the beginning of this century; see *Hayrenik'i jayn*, no. 38 (60), September 1966, reference from Ayvazyan, *Pamjatniki*, p. 74, note 21.